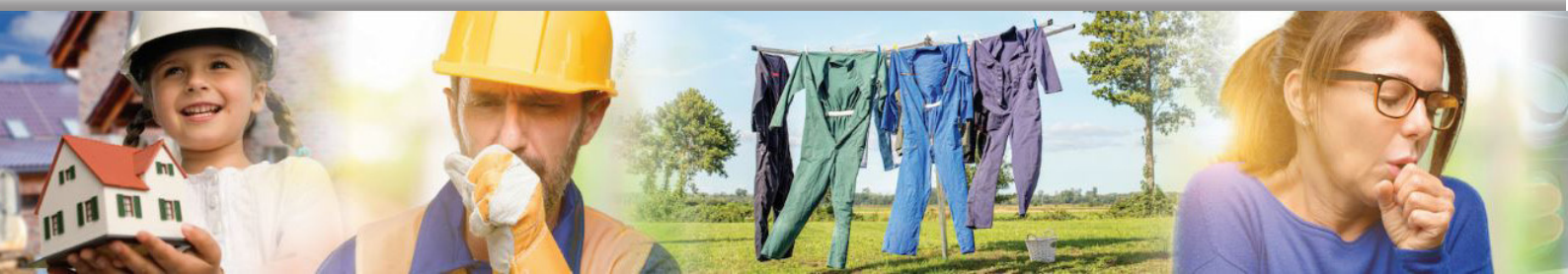


Annual General Meeting

Friday 22nd March 2024 at 3:30pm

AGENDA

1. **Meeting Open** - Melita Markey CEO
2. **Hon. Treasurers Report Calendar Year 2024** - John Martelli
3. **Confirmation of Executive and Ordinary Committee for 2024**
4. **President's Update** - Dave Hall
5. **ADSA Activities and Legislative Update for 2024** - Melita Markey CEO
6. **Guest Speaker** - Former WA Premier the Hon Peter Dowding SC
7. **Asbestos Victims Deserve Memorials-** Associate Professor Bobbie Oliver
8. **Medical Research Update** - Dr. Melvin Chin, Oncologist.
9. **The 32nd Presentation of the ADSA Professor Eric Saint Memorial Award** - Tabatha Saint on behalf of the Saint family.



Western Australia: Mesothelioma Capital of the World.

Australia's Asbestos Burden: Est. at 10 million tonnes

Dear Members and Friends, a warm welcome from our committee and staff to 2024 and the ADSA's 46th Annual General Meeting. Our organisation is heading rapidly to a Silver Anniversary of service to the sufferers of asbestos and other dust diseases, as well as their families and other members of the Australian community.

2023 ended on an emotional note for the ADSA with the Federal Parliamentary Commemoration for the 20th Anniversary of the Asbestos Ban in Australia. The event was held on the 7th of December at Parliament House Canberra, with a reading in the house on the last day of Sitting by the Hon Minister for Industrial Relations Mr Tony Bourke.

In his poignant speech, the Minister noted that we have over 4000 deaths a year from asbestos-related diseases, despite the 20th anniversary of the ban being last year. This figure represents three times the annual national road toll, and four times the number of Australians that died in the first year of the COVID pandemic.

While the speech initially neglected to acknowledge the ADSA or the significant death toll in WA, this was later corrected in Hansard with a statement of indulgence by the head of PGARD Mr Russell Broadbent MP. Many thanks to International Asbestos Ban Campaigner Ms Laurie Kazan-Allen, who wrote to Russell pointing out the oversight.

“As Ms Laurie Kazan-Allen rightly highlighted in her email to me, it was a glaring omission not to acknowledge the ADSA in the 20-year commemoration. So today I rise to thank them for their incredible work over many years.” - Mr Russell Broadbent MP

The Federal Asbestos Eradication Agency estimates Australia's asbestos burden to be approximately 10 million tonnes. This consists of 6.2 million tonnes of asbestos materials remaining in our built environment (1 in 3 homes) and 3.5 million tonnes of naturally occurring asbestos (NOA) in Wittenoom W.A. left behind by CSR's mine and mill when it closed operations in 1966. The NOA James Hardie mine in Baryulgil NSW has not been quantified. It is expected Australia's asbestos burden will rise significantly. This is compounded by the looming threat of silica in manufactured stone, with over 100,000 Australians at risk of developing a life changing silicosis diagnosis.

To date, there is no dedicated funding to address these statistics. Urgent attention is needed from our Parliamentary leaders to assist in the eradication of asbestos from our environment.

Considering all this, we have no doubt that our commitment to the management and reduction in instances of asbestos and silica-related diseases is more relevant than ever

Western Australia: Mesothelioma Capital of the World.

Tel: 08 9344 4077 | www.asbestosdiseases.org.au | info@asbestosdiseases.org.au
219 Main St Osborne Park WA 6017 | PO Box 1394 Osborne Park WA 6916

Asbestos: A Public Health Issue

As recently as February of this year, asbestos contamination was discovered at 75 sites across greater Sydney. This is distinct evidence of the failures of asbestos management within state and government regulatory bodies. While blame has been laid squarely at the feet of private companies and supply chain complexities, there is so much more that can be done on a governmental level. As one example, testing is woefully inadequate and inefficient, relying far too much on basic measures such as the human eye. Even so, testing has cost the taxpayer over \$200,000. If this is the case in Sydney, how many more contaminated sites remain undetected around the country?

“The community has been badly let down by the regulatory process that governs the safety of recycled mulch.” - Sydney’s Lord Mayor Clover Moore.

While statements have been made by public health authorities, there have been no findings as to the source of this contamination more than a month after a taskforce was established, and no concrete commitment to ensuring that such a blatant violation of public health standards does not happen again. The reality as we know it is that asbestos-related conditions take 30 years to develop, causing a potentially catastrophic fallout that current officials will not be around to be held accountable for.

“Currently, there is no priority in any Australian public health or industrial diseases strategy to develop lifesaving treatments for asbestos and dust diseases sufferers.” - Melita Markey.

Sadly, the removal of asbestos in Australia has not been addressed by the companies responsible. There has not been a recall, for example, of James Hardie asbestos products under consumer law, or any efforts by mining companies to clean up their contaminated sites. As such, the fastest growing cohort of diseases is now coming from non-occupational exposure in our communities, which is not as widely recognised or addressed.

The ADSA is calling on Public Health Departments Federally and locally to properly fund asbestos disease treatment and medical research. It is not an aging industrial disease, but a very real threat to Public Health in Australia. New diagnoses are cropping up regularly, and the latest contamination in Sydney has pointed to many more possible exposures.



**Partially implemented
with further work required**

Improving asbestos:

- identification
- management
- transport, storage and disposal
- education
- data and information sharing and medical research

So much more to do - Australian Government “Australian Asbestos National Strategic Plan” in response to the Rotterdam Convention

Western Australia: Mesothelioma Capital of the World.

Summary of 2023 - Calendar Year Key Points

- Through 2,162 appointments, the medical team reviewed 941 patients for counselling and assistance in connection with asbestos exposure and likely health risk.
- 142 new registers were evaluated and counselled by the ADSA Advisory Staff in relation to issues of asbestos-caused diseases.
- 1023 phone and email enquiries were received by the ADSA office regarding exposure to asbestos and its health risk and medico-legal matters.
- Our advisory services team completed 130 patient consultations.
- Our nurse practitioner, Deirdre Louw, hosted 21 pastoral care events both in local and rural areas.
- 393 patients were sent for scans.
- 267 breathing tests were completed.
- The 20th anniversary of the asbestos ban in Australia. ADSA invited and recognised.
- ADSA's 28th Ecumenical service was held in King's Park in the 40-degree heat, but will return to the Redemptorist Monastery this November.
- The renovations of the Osborne Park ADSA offices were completed.
- Vice President Dave Hall and committee member Greg Comans hosted the annual golf day, raising \$15,000.
- Spirometry equipment was generously donated by the Yinhawangka Corporation.
- A fond farewell to our long serving GP and friend Dr. Greg Deleuil, who is retiring from the ADSA office but not the ADSA committee.
- A warm welcome to our new GP, Dr. Peter Brockhoff.
- Silicosis diagnoses have been on the rise. Curtin University estimates suggest that 600,000 Australians have been exposed to crystalline silica at work. ADSA's dust screening program is currently being led by Dr. Brockhoff.
- Deaths: Sadly, more than 159 of our dear friends and members have lost their lives in 2023.
- Our campaign for a Wittenoom memorial was unfortunately rejected by the Shire of Ashburton. It is currently sitting with the State Government Petitions Committee, chaired by the Hon. Peter Foster MLC.



Robert Vojakovic at the Solidarity Park Wittenoom Workers' memorial plaque.

Western Australia: Mesothelioma Capital of the World.

Tel: 08 9344 4077 | www.asbestosdiseases.org.au | info@asbestosdiseases.org.au
219 Main St Osborne Park WA 6017 | PO Box 1394 Osborne Park WA 6916